service is not permitted for the present in Agartala in view of the special circumstances prevailing there.

Erosion In the worth of VSNL

982. SHRIMATI CHANDRA KALA PANDEY:

SHRI NILOTPAL BASU:

SHRI DIPANKARMUKHERJEE:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government arc aware of news items captioned "VSNL's worth down by Rs. 20,000 crore" on 17th June, 2001 and "Government ignored official suggestions" on 18th June, 2001 published in the Times of India;

(b) if so, whether it is a fact that Governments decisions to end monopoly of VSNL much before 2004 as established by Government in the WTO telecom negotiations and reiterated during GDR issue has led to huge erosion of the VSNL's worth; and

(c) whether any enquiry was made about the allegation of insider trading to benefit the potential buyers of VSNL's shares to the detriment of the national economy?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The share price in the market is determined by various market forces and market sentiments. Further, according to available information, it appears that there was a sharp decline in the share value of almost all Indian Technology Companies during March to May 2000 as reflected in Bombay Stock Exchange Information Technology Index. The fall in share price of VSNL during this period was comparable to the general trend of the Indian Capital Market in Technology Sector.

(c) No, Sir.